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A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

DEDICATION

OF THE

7551.349

SECOND CHURCH,

BOYLSTON STREET,

NOVEMBER 4th, 1874,

BY

REV. CHANDLER ROBBINS, D. D.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF GRIBBEN & CO., 19 SPRING LANE,
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SERMON.

Matthew xii. 6: "BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT IN THIS PLACE IS ONE GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE."

THE prayer addressed to Almighty God, as we laid the corner-stone of this house a little more than a year ago, He has graciously answered. This goodly structure, safely and speedily built, and furnished with all things necessary for the use and enjoyment of worship, is its fulfilment. And now that for the first time we enter into its gates as a congregation, it is no less the prompting of our hearts than our bounden duty to return to Him our united thanks for thus crowning the work of our hands with His blessing. But not our thanks alone do we come now to present to Him, but to offer this edifice itself, with all that it contains, as a sacrifice of our gratitude and reverence.

Deign O God, to accept it at our hands! And as we now by simple rites dedicate it to Thy service and honor, so do Thou let Thy Spirit consecrate it as a holy temple to us, and consecrate ourselves also as living temples to Thee! And may Thy presence never depart from within its walls!

It is a solemn and interesting thought that we are applying this house to-night for the first time to the sacred uses for which it has been prepared. We are entering it at the head of that long procession of worshippers which, from Sabbath to Sabbath, shall pass through its portals — the end of which no man can foresee, but the line of which stretches on before our imagination through years, even through centuries, to come — embracing the hoary heads and trembling frames of some of those little children who come into it now hanging upon our hands, and the shadowy images of thousands yet unborn, to whom those children's children will appear as venerable as the most aged amongst us appears to the infant of to-day. May God grant that it may prove to them all none other than the gate of heaven! May God grant that of all this lengthening train not one may fail of entering, through "the door," into the everlasting kingdom of His love!

When we think of the hallowed objects to which this house is to be consecrated; when we think of the occasions on which it will be opened—the peaceful Sabbaths, the days of public thanksgiving and humiliation, the joyous festivals and the sad funerals; when we think of the sacred ceremonies that will be performed within its walls — the holy Supper, the baptismal rite, the matrimonial service, with all the various emotions which they express and awaken; when we think of the prayers that shall be uttered, the silent aspirations that shall go up to God, the tears of penitence that, falling

unseen by men, shall glisten to the eyes of angels; the offerings of gratitude, the tender intercessions, the vows of amendment, the promptings to forgiveness and reconciliation, to self-denial, and charity; the yielding up of the will in childlike submission; the messages of consolation and pardon that shall come home to the sorrowing heart and the wounded spirit; the lessons of divine wisdom which shall be taught and learned; the hopes of divine mercy which shall be kindled, the experiences of divine love which shall be enjoyed, the the glimpses of heaven which shall be gained; when we think of the multitudes of the living and the unborn, with whose deepest feelings, whose best, whose everlasting life, it will be intimately associated; when these thoughts come rushing in upon the mind, who can contemplate this edifice and this solemn rite which we are performing without profound emotion and interest! If we were only to sit in silence and muse and meditate upon such themes as the occasion suggests to a thoughtful mind, it would have a spiritual impressiveness and beauty beyond the power of words to describe.

These considerations serve to admonish us of the high and sacred import of the act which we have assembled to perform. It is no light responsibility we are taking upon us, to inaugurate the order of sacred service to which this house is henceforth to be devoted. Offering it to God, it becomes us to be fully persuaded what is His will concerning it, and how it may be made acceptable to Him. Preparing it for the spiritual and

eternal welfare of the souls of men, it is incumbent upon us to be well assured on what conditions it can be made instrumental to that end.

A deep feeling of this responsibility and a sincere desire to meet these requirements have influenced me in the selection and treatment of the theme which the text suggests.

It is one of those sublime declarations of Jesus concerning himself, in which he expressed his consciousness of divinity. They are all the more impressive and significant by reason of his humility. It is essential to a just appreciation of his character that they should be pondered and kept in remembrance. It might surprise those who have not taken careful note of them, or who are accustomed to regard him only, or chiefly, in a strictly human aspect, to find how numerous they are.

They are the more important because they are his own witness concerning himself. They are the antidote which he himself furnished to the low and false notions concerning his nature and offices which he foreknew would be current in the world after his death, and which are circulating around us to-day. I make no apology for recalling a few of them to your remembrance on this occasion.

Christ himself has the right to be heard in his own Church, and to be heard in his own words. Let the preacher withhold, and with all the assembly reverently listen, while he speaks of himself. "Behold a greater

than Solomon," the royal sage, "a greater than Jonas," the Hebrew prophet, "is here." "The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath." "I am the truth." "I am the light of the world." "I am the resurrection and the life." "I came out from God." "I and my Father are one." "No man knoweth who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him!" "All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." "I give unto my sheep eternal life." "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations."

These are but a few of the many instances in which Jesus testified concerning himself; and it is a fact to which too great importance cannot be attached that every one of such testimonies, from the beginning to the close of his ministry, is marked by the same consciousness of more than human dignity. For even the two or three which might be adduced as exceptions, such as "My Father is greater than I," are really not exceptions, but wonderful confirmations of the fact. Those, however, to which we have just now listened are a broad and solid bases for our faith in his divinity to rest upon.

It is meet that they should be amongst the first sentences uttered from this pulpit, for they should stamp its character from its first occupancy, and give the keynote of all the future services of this house.

For we have built it, and now solemnly set it apart

and consecrate it, as a CHRISTIAN SANCTUARY. This is its distinction. This — if there is any meaning in these ceremonies, any sincerity in our professions, any real virtue in the place, — this defines its character and describes its purposes. It is its Christian designation that gives it all its value. It is because it is associated with, and subordinate to, and rests upon the authority of, *one who is greater than the temple*, that we can regard it as sacred, without superstition, that we can beautify and delight in it, without sensuousness, and while attaching our affections to it, still spiritualize and elevate them.

To Him be it subordinated from this hour. To Him, who was not only greater than that magnificent Jewish temple, in the presence of which he made that lofty announcement — with its ark, its altars, its mercy-seat, its cherubim, its holy of holies, and all its imposing rites and priestly orders — which was so soon to pass away — but greater than all temples, greater than the Sabbath, greater than the Bible, greater than the Church itself, with all its ordinances, pre-eminent in all things. This we believe to be in accordance with the Father's will and for His glory. This we believe to be for the best interests of true religion and virtue. This we are convinced will be for the highest welfare of all who shall meet within its walls. This, we trust, will make it a safe fold of the Good Shepherd, where his sheep and lambs may ever hear his own voice, and feel his peaceful and life-giving influence. This, we hope, will

make it an attractive place to those who love Christ himself better than sect or ritual; and thus, we are persuaded, we shall do our part towards promoting unity and peace in the Church Universal.

It is true, indeed, that we have built and consecrated it as a "*House of God.*" But of the "God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" that God whom he alone has clearly revealed; that Father whom he alone has manifested; unto whom no man can come—unto the positive knowledge, the perfect love, and full enjoyment of, and fellowship with—except by him. For through no other source has He disclosed the depth and tenderness of His father-love.

It is indeed a "House of Worship." But as Christ teaches and shows us whom and how to worship—with what sacrifices, in what spirit—and all its ordinances, are of his appointment.

It is indeed a "House of Prayer." But as he taught his disciples to pray,—of prayer in his spirit, and in his name.

It is indeed a "House of Instruction," in all human duties in every relation of life. But as they have been inculcated and exemplified by him who alone knew the perfect will of God and pleased him in all things.

In dedicating it, then, as a Christian Sanctuary, we comprehend all these other names; we include all these other uses. And adhering to this distinction we secure these uses from being corrupted by superstition, perverted by conceit, or desecrated by irreverence or famil-

iarity. This name defines its peculiar, its sacred, its beneficent character — all the purposes to which it should be devoted, all the sentiments with which it should be regarded, and the manner also in which all its arrangements should be made, and all its affairs, internal and external, conducted.

Time will allow me only to select for more particular consideration a single essential, distinctive, feature of a true Christian sanctuary. It is that, however, which taken in its most comprehensive sense, includes all the rest.

It is sacredly and expressly devoted to the preaching of Christ. I do not say of Christianity; because that has become a vague word. That is a term which easily admits of misapprehension, and which is sometimes strangely abused. That applies to any system which men may frame for themselves, either wholly out of the teachings of Jesus, as they understand them, or partly out of his lessons, and partly out of their own notions, and of whatever else their taste may lead them to select from any other sources. I do not say of Christianity, for that which is so called may be chargeable with inconsistencies and errors, or may assume repulsive forms, and so reflect discredit upon the religion which it misrepresents. I do not say of Christianity, but of Christ, the veritable Christ, the Christ of the Evangelists; the Christ whom John and the rest of the twelve saw and handled; the Christ whom Paul afterward saw and so powerfully preached; the Christ to whom all the

Apostles bore witness — the veritable Christ, undivided, indivisible — "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever," the very same person, notwithstanding the marked varieties which may be traced in the different portraitures of the sacred writers; the same person viewed in different lights; the identical person, though not completely limned by either, or by all, because spiritually too vast to be thoroughly comprehended or described; because over and above all that was clearly manifest to their senses, within reach of their understanding, and disclosed to their faith, there was still in him something wonderful, a mysterious depth, something that no man could know, none but the Father. *To the preaching of Christ himself*, the same Christ whom the Evangelists described and the Apostles preached, and just as they represented him — each and all of them — and in all the variety and diversity of aspects. For this is the true Christ. This is the Christ of God. This is the Christ on whom the church is founded and rests, and by the faith of whom it has been established and perpetuated, and is extending, and will enlarge its boundaries, until it shall cover the whole earth. This is the Christ, by the faithful and earnest preaching of whom all the moral wonders were wrought which signalize the Apostolic age.

This Christ cannot be mistaken, cannot be confounded with any false, or fanciful, or humanly constructed Christ; cannot lead any soul astray from God and eternal life. It is safe to hold him up for the faith of men, and to

leave the result to his own influence. It is *not* safe to alter, to cover up, to doubt, to apologize for, any feature, any word, or any act, which the ordained eye witnesses clearly ascribe to him. Doubts, suspicions, objections, belong outside of a Christian sanctuary. They have no right to show themselves in it. The church may be assailed from without; it must not be undermined or betrayed from within. It has no title to the name, unless it rests upon the Christ of the New Testament, unshaken, undisturbed, as upon the eternal rock. The very idea of a Christian sanctuary, as the very existence of the church, necessitates a divine foundation. The very idea of preaching implies the certainty of facts declared, and an authoritative standard of the truths proclaimed. Hence it is consistent and honest to substitute some other name for utterances on the Sabbath day, which claim no higher source—and show that they have no higher — than the speaker's own fancy. We must believe, or we cannot preach. And the object of our faith is the Word of God. And the eternal, perfect Word of God, became incarnate, and spake and was manifested in him to whom the Apostles bore witness. And we, to-day, believe on him through their testimony, and by thus believing have fellowship with them, and with the Son, and with the Father—becoming included in that most comforting, re-assuring petition of the Saviour's sacerdotal prayer; "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe on me *through their word*; that

they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."

And yet, although it is through their word that the church of to-day believes in him, it is not wholly because of it. For Christ himself is greater than his witnesses. His sayings have an authority of their own, independent of the testimony of those who have recorded them. We do not believe that he spake as never man spake, because Matthew and the rest say that he so spake; but because the sayings which they have preserved produce this vivid impression upon our mind. We do not believe that he came out from God, because John so declares; but because his own word and works force this conviction upon us. We say with the Samaritan, "Now we believe not because of their sayings, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that he is indeed the Christ." And when we have believed in him from his own testimony, our faith is above being weakened or disturbed by any difficulties, or any apparent inconsistencies in the mere letter of the Scriptures. Whatever criticism may do with words or dates, however successfully it may seem to have picked to pieces the record, it cannot mar, it cannot so much as touch, the divine image of Christ which is enshrined in the believing and loving heart.

The Christ of the New Testament wears the lineaments and bears the credentials of the Son of God. His words and works attest his heavenly descent and office. So that every heart that is disposed to recognise

and love truth, purity, goodness—God himself, and whatever is of God—every heart, even the youngest, and especially the young and childlike, is disposed to believe in *him* and love him.

And believed and loved, he will be obeyed and imitated. Every virtue which he exemplified will become an object of affection. Every lesson which he taught will find a warm lodgment in the heart. Every sweet promise which he uttered will be implicitly relied upon. Every consolatory word which he spake will be cordially embraced. Such love to God and to man as he displayed will be enkindled in the breast. And a constant, almost irresistible attraction will draw the soul upward to himself. The sanctuary where he is so preached will become to all who frequent it as a heavenly place; a place of nearest access to the Father and sweetest fellowship with his children, on earth and in heaven; a place into which the disciples, meeting together in his name, may come with the glad assurance that their Lord will be in the midst of them and impart his promised blessing; and from which they shall depart in peace, concious of forgiveness, animated with new desire, and clothed with new power, to minister to their fellow-men, to cope with all their spiritual adversaries, and to serve and glorify their Father which is in heaven.

That which is necessary, the only thing that is necessary, to vitalize the modern church is no longer to reverse the divine order which Christ has announced in

our text; no longer to subordinate himself to temple, church, dogma, ritual, or system; but to elevate him above them all; to keep him ever prominent, foremost, supreme, in the administration of his religion. The single, high determination of the Apostle, to "know nothing else save Jesus Christ and him crucified," is as necessary to successful preaching in our own cities as it was in ancient Corinth and Rome. This divine principle of salvation has not lost its power, nor has the world outgrown its need. But modern preaching has often lost its power, through its failure to act upon it; through its vain attempts to substitute for it something more attractive and influential. Those sublime facts of the Gospel, in which lies the very power of God for man's salvation — which are indeed the manifestation, the putting forth of His power for that end — though of necessity mentioned in every pulpit, during the reading of the Scriptures, are in some pulpits either kept out of view, or even disputed, in the sermon. What better results of preaching can be expected till this fatal mistake shall have been corrected? What can they hope to accomplish for the regeneration of the world who set at naught the only instrumentality divinely appointed for this end? What can the preacher do without Christ? Our churches languish, as our souls pine, through the putting away of him who is their life. Their light is dim, their joy departs, their beauty fades, their life decays, their altar fire goes out. Call him back; invite him down; let him come in; open to him

every door and window of our churches and of our hearts; put him foremost in our preaching and confession; put him forward in our lives; receive his love and respond to it; receive his life and return for it our own; and then, all that is pure in thought, lovely in feeling, holy in desire, elevated in motive, and strong in purpose — all that is quickening to the conscience, comforting to the sorrowful, invigorating to the weak, encouraging to the struggling, winning to the young, reviving, regenerating to the soul — all the best influences and fruits and enjoyments of the Christain spirit, the Christain ordinances, and the Christain life, will be realized in our churches and realized in ourselves.

In dedicating this house with the recognition of "One who is greater than the temple," we are true to the principles and traditions of the Second Church. Although I am aware that the present is not an occasion to deal with history, but with principles, and have purposed strictly to respect this appropriateness, yet meeting as we now do, after the long period which divides us from the founders of this church, to dedicate this new sanctuary to its sacred uses, our thoughts naturally revert to the first house of worship built by them two hundred years ago. They were a little company of godly men, residents of the north part of Boston, who separated from the First Church, not from any alienation of spirit or doctrinal disagreement, but for the laudable purpose — encouraged by their former minister, the venerable John Cotton himself — of providing for the reli-

gious wants of the increasing population in their vicinity. It would be pleasant to find some description or picture of that edifice. But none has come down to us. The only notice we have of it is altogether incidental, and is such as to pique our curiosity. Our church records give us reason to believe that some of the pews were accommodated with private doors opening into the street; for what purpose, or according to what style of architecture, or in what manner constructed, we are left wholly to conjecture. We know that it was a plain and humble structure, with no architectural ornaments to attract the eye, no devices to impress the imagination, and little or no provision for bodily comfort; in strict keeping with their puritanical principles and their limited resources. No account has been preserved of the time or mode of its dedication, which probably took place with very little ceremony, as part of the regular service of the Sabbath day. But plain as the building was, and simple as the form of its consecration, no stately and gorgeous temple of the Old World was ever reared or entered with profounder reverence for the Living God, a more earnest desire to promote His glory, or a more devoted purpose to conform to His holy and righteous will.

Nominally and legally we are their successors. We inherit their corporate title, their records, their property. So far as these external bonds are concerned, we and all the intervening generations constitute with them one church. In form of government, also, we are sub-

stantially one. For, however far we may have relaxed some of the rules of their ecclesiastical discipline, this church has never separated from the Congregational order, nor lost its attachment to the name. Though this house is new, our church is old. We would not forget the tie that binds us to the past. We would not be unmindful of those into whose inheritance we have entered. We would not disallow the trust that our lineage lays upon us. As it is said concerning the heirs of noble families, so should it be felt by the members of an ancient church; their descent itself is a high obligation.

But are we connected only by these external bonds? Are we merely in name and form one church? Is the spiritual continuity broken? Have we fallen so far below the fathers in faith and piety, or advanced so far above them in spiritual enlightenment, that neither would own the other as of the same Christian household?

Though I can speak with positiveness only for myself and a part of the members of the Second Church, yet I trust I have the sympathy of all, when I say, that we desire to recognize, and do recognize, and highly prize, and fondly cherish, still deeper and more sacred ties binding the church of the present to the church of the past. We heartily acknowledge a true and holy fellowship, a spiritual unity, an essential oneness, with the original founders of the church, and with all the long line of their descendents. And we trust that they also, if permitted to take note of human things

would not be ashamed to acknowledge fellowship with us.

It is true that there are points of difference in our respective statements of belief; and that deeper or fainter shades of dissimularity may be traced between those of the successive generations. But the more carefully we study the original Covenant of the church, and the several Declarations of Faith which are found in its records, the more manifest it appears that after due allowance has been made for differences of style and diction peculiar to the several periods, there is a substantial agreement in what may be justly termed the fundamental articles of the Christian faith.

Do we find that throughout the first two centuries our ancestors received the Bible as containing a revelation from God, and a sure and sufficient rule of faith and practice; maintaining always the right of private judgment in its interpretation? Are not the same principles professedly held by this church to-day? And what a ground of fellowship is this alone, if sincerely adhered to! involving as it does the tacit pledge to accept all the doctrines which the Scriptures clearly and certainly teach as of divine authority, and all the moral rules which they positively enjoin as binding upon the conscience.

Do we find that they all believed in the One Living and perfect God, the Father, and in his manifestation of Himself in his moral attributes, especially in his love and grace in Jesus Christ? Is not the same faith equally precious to ourselves?

Do we find them all with one consent and equal zeal confessing Jesus to be the Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the only Mediator between God and man, the Saviour of sinners, who was crucified, died, and rose again; our Intercessor and Advocate, the Head of the church, the Judge of men, Prophet, Priest and King? Do not we also acknowledge and honor him in these, and in all the other names and offices in which he is presented in the Scriptures?

Did they all believe in the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, the abiding Comforter, the Convincer, the Sanctifier, the perpetual Witness to Christ, the Discloser to believers of the deepest and sweetest meaning of his words, and the Dispenser to them of his most precious things? Here also I have supposed that this church, as well as myself, does most cordially agree with them.

The precise dogma in which they attempted to express and define the relations between these divine names we may not accept; but we believe as firmly as they in all that is expressed or implied, both of distinction and of unity, in the formula which our Lord himself gave to his Apostles in his last commission, to be used at the induction of men into the Christian Church, and we repeat it always on the occasion in which he directed it to be employed with the utmost reverence. We believe that it describes the essential distinction of his religion—that which separates it from all other religions, and distinguishes genuine Christianity from all its spurious or imperfect forms.

It is the only formula prescribed by Christ in the nature of a creed. It is exclusively and thoroughly Christian. It is necessary to the completeness and purity of the Christian faith. It is the high and broad common ground on which believers of all ages meet. It is the mark, the rallying point, the sacred trust, of all the members of the Holy Catholic Church. And appointed as it is for the consecration of the individual soul as a living temple, it is no less appropriate to the purpose for which we are now assembled.

By this symbol, then, and to the belief, the service, and the honor, of each and all the three divine Names associated in it, we dedicate these walls and all that they cover and contain. Trusting that we, and all who come after us, may be partakers of all the hallowing and blessed influences which are ever flowing from that three fold spring of spiritual life and joy.

But what need is there that we should collate all the other articles of the creeds of our predecessors with our own? Or of what moment is it how far they may agree or differ? In all of them they attempted in their day, as we do now, to make prominent some truth which they believed to be plainly taught in the Word of God, or fairly deduced from its teachings. They interpretated the Scriptures as we do, according to their light; and with all honesty declared what they thought they saw. But they always acknowledged that they might imperfectly discern their sense, and expected that new light might yet break forth from the Word. And they

would have been among the first to welcome that illumination. We also would not conceitedly conclude that our vision of the truth is so clear and perfect, that we can presume to attribute blindness to those who have gone before us, or that those who are coming after us may not find cause to alter and amend our views.

But however much or little we may differ on any or all other points, in that essential agreement of belief which we have already indicated in that glorious *symbol*, — I use this ancient term, as the Christian fathers used it, in its strictly etymological sense, — that *symbol*, that *casting together*, that condensed collection, of essentials, given by Christ himself — which is unchangeable, everlasting, and broad as the whole revelation of God — we have a vital spiritual tie uniting the Second Church of to-day with the Second Church of all former periods. And not with that single church only, but with the Holy Catholic Church of all ages, past, present, and to come.

But I see before me not only significant and beautiful *emblems* of the unity of the church of the present with the church of the past; but actual and tangible bonds of holy fellowship, precious silver links, fastening them together.* How welcome to our eyes the spectacle of these sacred and endeared vessels in this new sanctuary! How immediately they transfer to it the hallowed associations which our hearts have twined about them in other temples! How they impart to it at once the air of home!

* The ancient Silver Communion Service was before the pulpit.

But separate altogether from their holy significance, a peculiar interest attaches to them from their history. They have come down from two of the oldest churches in Boston, which nearly a century ago were united in one. Some of them bear an ancient date, and are inscribed with honored and sainted names. They have been preserved with reverential care through times of peril to church and state. They were safely concealed by pious hands, when foreign soldiers held possession of the town. They have survived the burning of one house of worship, and the demolition of three. They have accompanied this church in all its vicissitudes and wanderings. There are some persons present besides myself who have seen them spread out to view in nine different places of worship, this included.

Through what a succession of changes and migrations, (must I not say, can you not well imagine, of shocks to the church and to the feelings of those who have loved it,) have these memorial vessels been brought to the auspicious place where it is our privilege to look upon them now! God be thanked that whatever else, or whosoever else, associated with our beloved church, has been lost, these have been saved! That these hallowed relics still survive, unchanged, unharmed!

So long as these are reverently preserved and used, the Second Church of all ages is virtually one — one in faith, one in spirit, one in loyalty, one in grateful and loving remembrance of him who died for us all. There is no fear for the utter falling away of any church from

the "faith once delivered to the saints," so long as the commemorative rite to which this silver service is consecrated, shall be faithfully and piously observed. Such a church must needs recognize and believe with Paul, that "Jesus Christ and him crucified" is the central truth of the Gospel. Whatever low and unworthy notions of him may at any time be taught in the pulpit, or held in the pews, will be contradicted, rebuked, or corrected, by the silent, but impressive witness and teaching of these emblems,—associated as they must ever be with the touching scene and significant words which they bring vividly to remembrance; and identified, as they are, with the very person of the veritable Messiah, of him whose "body was broken and whose blood was shed for the remission of sins."

Here, then, in the briefest and most emphatic summary form, is the creed of the Second Church—the creed of its founders, of all our predecessors in the intervening generations, and our own creed also at the present hour. If any desire to know what we believe, where we stand, I would point him to these memorials, which we have faithfully guarded and preserved through all changes—and point also to the Church regularly and reverentially setting them forth and using them as the Lord commanded,—repeating, as we take the bread and the cup to our lips, his own words, in simple reliance upon their perfect truth and cleansing virtue.

As a church we have no views of Jesus which are not consistent with the person they commemorate, and

the facts they typify. We hold no doctrine, we teach no duty, we desire to entertain no sentiment, which they do not symbolize or suggest, or which is not in perfect harmony with the truths and lessons they inculcate. We will contemplate, we will study, we will use them, so long as we live, that we may better comprehend their deep and sacred meaning; that we may better learn and apply their holy and beautiful lessons; that we may be forcibly reminded of every christian duty and tenderly rebuked for every unchristian feeling; that we may be strengthened for the work and testimony of Jesus; that we may find comfort in our trials and help to bear them patiently; that we may learn to deny ourselves, and to bear the cross without a murmur; that we may be ever drawing closer to the risen Saviour in affectionate obedience and sweet confidence; until at length, by his cleansing influence and unpraising power, we may be made meet to sit down with all the faithful and redeemed who have gone before and shall come after us, at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

And now, Hail! holy and beautiful house! Consecrated Christian Sanctuary! amiable tabernacle of the Lord of Hosts! May Reverence and Purity guard thy doors; Faith worship at thy shrine; Humility kneel before thy altar; Truth teach from thy pulpit; Righteousness clothe thy Priests; Hope and Joy fill the hearts of thy people; Love and Peace dwell within thy gates; and the Dove of Heaven, symbol of the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, spread over thy congregation His hallowing and benignant wings! Amen.